

Note: These are my personal notes, according to what I thought I heard at the meeting. These notes have not been reviewed by any of the meeting participants.

Meeting notes by Scott Cantrell

October 13, 1999

California Environmental Trust

400 Capitol Mall

Participants: S. Ritchie, M. Mantell, M. Ebbin, W. White, C. Coude, M. Fris, D. Daniel, S. Cantrell, C. Beale, M. Schoonover

Subject: Integration of MSCS, ERP and other CALFED efforts

- Need integration between the ERP and MSCS and EWA. How do we restructure the 3 volumes of the ERP and MSCS so people can buy into it? Need to alleviate stakeholder perception that we have two separate programs. We also need integration between EWA and ERP flows (one environmental water program, not two).
- ERP Focus Group is a policy advisor group to the ERPP; they are meeting one week from Friday to discuss integration issues (P. Leonard, S. Johnson, G. Bobker, R. Rempel, P. Rhoades, R. Borgonova). We've made a policy decision to link facilities with ERP actions. Bobker doesn't think the science is there to support this approach of south Delta bundling.
- Daniel said we could draw our project boundaries large enough and write project description in such a way to alleviate Bobker's concerns. A workshop of independent scientists will likely be convened by the end of the year to help us prioritize actions in the ERP/MSCS, possibly by the end of the year. We would present the panel a list of our critical needs species and ask them to evaluate our list.
- There was discussion about various ways to package elements of the lower San Joaquin River and South Delta bundle, writing a federal biological opinion and getting NCCP authorization. The USFWS Biological Opinion for the ISDP was a jeopardy opinion; RPA was to wait for CALFED good stuff to happen; if we try to go forward with facilities portion alone of SDI we will fail unless we link ERP actions in the south Delta.
- There is a time gap between completion of the SDI NEPA/CEQA document and the south Delta ERP document. It was noted that the gap may not be that significant such that the schedules could adjusted to coincide.
- White asked where the linkage occurred between pre-ROD and post-ROD ERP implementation? What are the strategic goals? Projects should be prioritized according to strategic goals not what's in somebodies backyard.
- Coude talked about science driven versus regulatory driven process of identifying critical needs actions.
- Suggestion was made to tie milestones to targets instead of specific actions; specific actions may change over time through adaptive management.
- Discussion on how to re-package the MSCS and ERP. The biological components of the MSCS could be blended into the ERP. The remaining portion of the MSCS would consist of mitigation, compliance roadmap, service area impacts, reservoir sites, etc. One of the purpose of the MSCS was to fill in the gaps of the ERP.

- Goude said interrelated, interdependent and indirect impacts need to be addressed in the federal biological opinion; this is where the present disconnect exists (a hypothetical example was given of the Alameda whipsnake being impacted by development resulting from increased water deliveries).
- Need to take ERP and overlay policy needs and critical needs. Critical needs are a list of species that are in worst shape or are subject to the greatest threats; list is used to identify annual spending priorities for CVP habitat restoration projects. We need to incorporate critical needs issues into our decision-making process.
- CALFED has not yet defined service area impacts (because they have not yet determined whether there will be new reservoirs, additional new water supplies, etc.); there has been no agreement whether there will be increased exports therefor, we can't identify what service areas will be impacted and mitigation responsibilities.
- Ritchie said we need to begin defining service area impacts that may result from water deliveries; need to look at existing HCP's, potential for conversion of habitat.
- Mantell said we need to begin engaging in the process of negotiating funding sources and defining a process for offsetting any impacts additional water causes.
- Perception problem with water stakeholders that CALFED isn't generating any new water; they will walk from the negotiating table if they are told they will get new water after all however, there will be service area impacts; we have to approach this issue very cautiously.